

Water Shortage Contingency Plan

Westlands delivers small quantities of untreated, non-potable CVP water which is ultimately used for municipal and industrial (M&I) purposes by Lemoore Naval Air Station and by various rural commercial and residential customers located within the District boundaries. Westlands also conveys raw water to the Cities of Huron and Coalinga, which have separate water supply contracts with the USBR. No water is treated prior to delivery. Westlands has no treatment facilities to provide potable water supplies to these incidental non-agricultural customers.

Westlands suffers under a water short situation even when 100% of the contract amount is available. Allocation and shortage procedures for agricultural water are presented in the Ag Water Management Plan for details on this topic. Even though M&I water supplies have been allocated under the agricultural contract and are currently last to be curtailed in a severe water shortage situation, discussions have occurred recently that propose the possibility of an M&I shortage provision.

The highest level of annual non-agricultural water deliveries has been approximately 6,500 AF. Given the reductions in Westlands' CVP water supplies due to federal regulatory restrictions, it is likely that future non-agricultural water deliveries will be reduced even with modest population increases in the area. This is because reduced agricultural water supplies from the federal government will lead to a reduction in processing-related uses and in the farm labor population living in Westlands.

Estimates of water demand for the next 12, 24, and 36 months should be similar to the non-agricultural water use in an average water year, about 5,000 AF. The "worst case" water supply estimates for the next 12, 24, and 36 months are zero. Currently all non-agricultural water is part of the CVP contract supply. Since the extent of the additional regulatory restrictions is unknown at this time, this possibility cannot be ruled out. However, it has been the policy of the USBR to deliver a minimum of 75 percent of historical M&I use, even when agricultural allocations are considerably less than that. Other supplies from internal groundwater transfers are possible but because of uncertainty that groundwater can meet Title 22 standards and the lack of proximity to District distribution facilities, these supplies cannot be guaranteed.

The CVP allocation to Westlands is shared between agricultural, incidental agricultural and incidental non-agricultural water users. The District's Regulations for the "Allocation of Agricultural Water Within the Westlands Water District" (Appendix A) state "The District's General Manager is authorized to set aside from the total entitlement whether they be from the District's basic contract supply or some other general source of water, for each area of the District the amount of water needed for M&I purposes...." Historically, when the overall water supply has been reduced, the non-agricultural water allocation may not be reduced a similar percentage. In certain cases of severe reduction, it is likely that the District would receive CVP hardship water for health and safety purposes based on the statement of need.

Westlands believes that although there have been no mandatory reductions imposed on the District's non-agricultural customers, water conservation has occurred during periods of reduced supply. This is apparent when comparing non-agricultural water use in full and reduced water supply years (in 2008 and 2011 water use was less than above average in each year). In the unlikely event, that the CVP allocates no water to Delta export water-service contractors and the allocation for M&I use is less than 75 percent of historical use, the District will purchase water from other sources including an Emergency Drought Water Bank. Mandatory rationing will be imposed to the extent that sufficient water cannot be purchased.

The District's General Manager is authorized by the Board of Directors to prohibit the wasteful use of water in Westlands. Westlands' Allocation Regulations state, "The unauthorized using, taking, or wasting of water may subject the water user to civil or criminal prosecution. The General Manager is authorized, after oral or written notice to the water user, if in his judgment, it is advisable and in the best interest of the District, to lock the delivery facilities of, or discontinue water service to, any water user." Additionally, the Westlands' board may adopt a resolution on the use of non-agricultural water.

Each non-agricultural customer is metered according to AWWA standards, according to customer type. The price of non-agricultural water is set at the beginning of each year, based on the anticipated supply, but changes can occur later. District revenues from the sale of incidental non-agricultural water vary annually between one and two percent of the District's overall revenues and have little influence on the District's overall financial resources.

Plan of Action

The General Manager has the authority to discontinue water service if, in his judgment, water is being wasted. Additionally, the Board adopted a resolution prohibiting the waste of M&I water. The District is encouraging other water suppliers (Cities of Huron and Coalinga, and Lemoore Naval Air Station) which receive water through Westlands' distribution system to develop water conservation plans and water shortage contingency plans. Westlands will continue to read all meters in the District on a monthly basis.